U.S. Application No. 09/750,125

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

- 1. (currently amended): A microporous soundproofing material comprising an expanded material formed through the step of impregnating a mixture of a thermoplastic elastomer and a thermoplastic polymer which is not a thermoplastic elastomer an olefin elastomer and an olefin polymer with an inert gas under high pressure of from 6 to 100 MPa and then decompressing the impregnated mixture, wherein the expanded material comprises closed cells having an average cell diameter of from 0.1 to 300 μ m uniformly distributed throughout the whole interior thereof, wherein the expanded material has a compressive load at 50% compression of 20 N/cm² or lower, and wherein the ratio of characteristic impedance of the microporous soundproofing material to characteristic impedance of air (Z_c^{mat}/Z_c) is from 5 to 50.
- 2. (previously presented) The microporous soundproofing material of claim 1, wherein the expanded material is formed from an unexpanded molding comprising the thermoplastic elastomer.
- 3. (previously presented): The microporous soundproofing material of claim 1, wherein the expanded material is formed from a molten thermoplastic elastomer, and the impregnated elastomer is subjected to molding simultaneously with decompression.

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- 4. (previously presented): The microporous soundproofing material of claim 1, wherein the expanded material has undergone heating after the decompression.
- 5. (original): The microporous soundproofing material of claim 1, wherein the inert gas is carbon dioxide.
- 6. (original): The microporous soundproofing material of claim 1, wherein the inert gas is in a supercritical state during the impregnation.
- 7. (original): The microporous soundproofing material of claim 1, wherein the inert gas has a pressure of 10 MPa or higher during the impregnation.
- 8. (previously presented): The microporous soundproofing material of claim 1, wherein the expanded material has a cell density of from 10⁵ to 10¹⁴ cells per cm³.
- 9. (previously presented): The microporous soundproofing material of claim 1, wherein the expanded material comprises closed cells having an average cell diameter of from 0.1 to 20 μ m evenly distributed throughout the whole interior thereof, and the expanded material has a cell density of from $3x10^8$ to 10^{14} cells per cm³.

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10. (previously presented): The microporous soundproofing material of claim 1, wherein the expanded material has a relative density of 0.6 or lower.

Claims 11-12 (canceled).

- 13. (previously presented): The microporous soundproofing material of claim 1, wherein the expanded material contains a flame retardant.
- 14. (original): The microporous soundproofing material of claim 13, wherein the flame retardant comprises a hydrated metal compound, a bromine compound or a mixture thereof.
- 15. (original): The microporous soundproofing material of claim 14, wherein the hydrated metal compound is a composite metal hydroxide represented by formula (1):

$$m(M_aO_b) n(Q_dO_e) cH_2O$$
 (1)

wherein M and Q represent different metal elements and Q is a metal element belonging to a group selected from Groups IVa, Va, VIa, VIIa, VIII, Ib, and IIb of the periodic table; and m, n, a, b, c, d, and e may be the same or different and each is a positive number.

16. (previously presented): A method of improving the soundproofing performance of an electronic appliance, which comprises applying the microporous soundproofing material of claim 1 inside the electronic appliance.

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REMARKS

Claims 1-10 and 13-16 are pending in the application. In claim 1, the language "a

mixture of a thermoplastic elastomer and a thermoplastic polymer which is not a thermoplastic

elastomer" is amended to "a mixture of an olefin elastomer and an olefin polymer". Support can

be found, for example, at page 8, lines 13-14 of the specification as originally filed. No new

matter is added. Entry of the amendment is respectfully requested.

Applicants respectfully submit that neither WO 99/47573 nor Cha et al contains any

disclosure, teaching or suggestion of the above claimed blend. WO 99/47573 describes a blend

of a polyurethane which is a thermoplastic elastomer and a polyolefin which is a non-elastomeric

thermoplastic polymer. Claim 1 as amended recites, inter alia, "an olefin elastomer," which

excludes the polyurethane of WO'573.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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